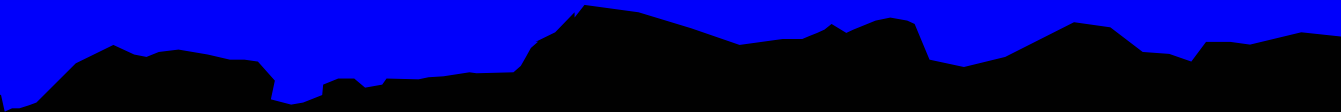# Chapter 9
Informing and Involving the Public

Chapter Product

An information and education strategy for the watershed that involves the public and stakeholders

Objectives

- Identify Target Audiences whose involvement will be needed to meet the goals and objectives of the watershed plan.

- Develop messages for target audiences.

- Select delivery mechanisms for disseminating the messages.

- Use this information to develop an information/education strategy for the watershed

What is an Information and Education Strategy?

An information and education strategy is a comprehensive plan that is designed to educate the public and motivate them to take action.

It is a coordinated plan that is tailored to the specific water quality concerns and people within the watershed

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Examples of Watershed Target Audiences

Sources	Target Audiences	Specific Target Audiences	Priority
Septic systems	Homeowners	Riparian homeowners with septic systems, homeowners who live in areas with sandy (vulnerable soils)	4
Residential fertilizer use	Homeowners	All non-agricultural homeowners in the critical area who use fertilizers or commercial lawn care companies	3
Livestock in stream	Agricultural landowners	Riparian agricultural landowners who own livestock	2
Storm drains	Homeowners	Urban residents, individuals who change oil in their cars	5
Eroding stream banks	Recreational groups	Canoeists, canoe livery owners, anglers	1

Specific Messages for Target Audiences

Messages should answer the following:

"What is the Water Quality Problem?"
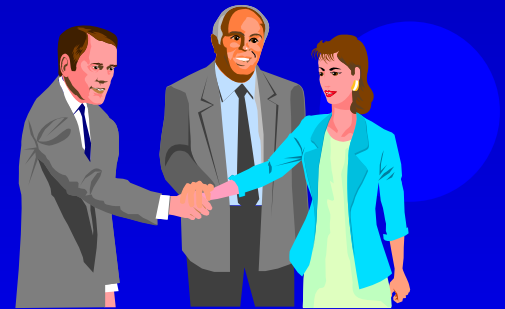
"How does it affect me?"

"Why should I care?"

"What can I do?"

Delivering the Message to the Target Audience

Delivery Mechanisms:

- One on one contacts
- Presentations to targeted groups
- Press releases and news articles in local papers
- Public service announcements or programs on local cable TV

Delivering the Message

Some Pointers from Experience:

- Create an I/E Subcommittee

- Keep the message simple and straightforward

- Use graphics and photos to illustrate

- Events in the watershed give a sense of ownership

- Communicate and build partnerships

- Be visible in the watershed, partner meetings, and media

- Create a logo for the watershed and use it on everything

I/E Strategy Table

Pollutant	Source/ Cause	Target Audience	Messages	Delivery Mechanisms	Potential Evaluation Method
Sediment	Stream bank erosion & Human access	Anglers, Canoeists	Protect your river; use stairs rather than the stream bank	Involve local angler groups and canoe liveries in stream bank stabilization activities; feature activities in local media; post signs at stabilized sites; display posters at local bait shops and canoe liveries	Track the number of groups and individuals participating; conduct focus group session with local livery owners

I/E Tasks Table

Delivery Mech-anism	Tasks	Responsible Organization	Milestones	Timeline	Estimated Costs
Involve local angler groups and canoe liveries in stream bank stabiliza-tion activities	Meet with local Trout Unlimited chapter to share project information and discuss how to involve their group	Livery owner on steering committee	Set meeting date; provide written project ideas following the meeting	1st quarter	$100
	Meet with local canoe liveries to share project information and discuss ways to educate canoeists		Set up one-on-one meetings; develop plan for coordinated education campaign	1st quarter 2nd quarter	$200

An Approvable Watershed Plan

Should include an I/E Strategy and a summary of the public participation process used in developing the plan. It should show the opportunity for public comment and how the partners were involved in developing the watershed plan.